The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

EDITORS: JOSEPH WOOD and JAMES CROSSLEY.

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Up in The Wild.

Up in a wild, where few men come to look,
There lives and sings a little lonely brook;
Liveth and singeth in the dreary pines,
Yet creepeth on to where the daylight shines.

Pure from their heaven, in mountain chalice caught,
It drinks the rains, as drinks the soul her thought;
And down dim hollows where it winds along,
Pours its life-burden of unlistened song.

I catch the murmur of its undertone.
That sigheth ceaselessly, Alone! alone!
And hear afar the Rivers gloriously
Shout on their paths towards the shining sea!

The voiceful Rivers, chanting to the sun,
And wearing names of honour, every one:
Outreaching wide, and joining hand with hand
To pour great gifts along the asking land.

Ah, lonely brook! Creep onward through the pines;
Press through the gloom to where the daylight shines!
Sing on among the stones, and secretly
Feel how the floods are all akin to thee!

Drink the sweet rain the gentle heaven sendeth;
Hold thine own path, however-ward it tendeth;
For somewhere, underneath the eternal sky,
Thou, too, shalt find the Rivers, by-and-by!

Bonds and Straits.

(A SERMON BY REV. H. BONNER.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."—JOHN XXI., 18.

The Evangelist, or whoever wrote the last chapter of this Gospel, takes this saying as referring to the manner of Peter's death. "This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God." The tradition is that Peter was taken to Rome and crucified there, head downwards at his own request; and the writer seems to have read the words in the light of this tradition, and to have understood them as foretelling Peter's martyrdom. The saying, however, admits of a wider application than this. It seems to point the contrast between Peter's earlier and later life, between his free happy life when Christ first found him with his nets and boats by the lake side and called him to follow Him, and his later life of straits and bonds for Christ's sake.

When we first meet Peter in the Gospels there is a strain of wilfulness and impulsiveness in him; he gives us the impression of a man full of eager, vigorous life, who would gird himself and go whither he would. He was one of those hopeful and self-confident men who think they have their lives in their own hands, that all they desire is within their reach, and that all which they purpose they can easily do. He does not measure difficulties, he is always ready for action, and is full of

daring and enterprise. But in the First Epistle of Peter, written when he was an old man, we get a different impression of him. He seems quieter, less impulsive, as if the yoke had been on him and he had learned to bend his neck willingly to it. He had suffered many things since those early days of companionship with Christ; he had endured bonds, he had been driven hither and thither by persecution, he had been in the narrow places of life—in straits, and these had taken some of his early wilfulness and self-confidence out of him. He speaks with a different accent in his Epistle from that which he has in the Gospels. With what gentle wisdom he exhorts to patience in trial, quietness under reproach, and to humility and submission. What grace and significance the words have on his lips, "Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you, be subject one to another, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." Something has changed him; his nature has grown deeper and sweeter, his early wildness and self-assertion have gone. He is courageous still, but his courage is no longer loud and boisterous as in his early manhood. The strain of wilfulness we mark in him in the Gospels is no longer to be seen, and he is the stronger having lost it. He speaks with the tone of a man who has learned quietness and restraint, and detachment from self, and who has found the peace and victory which come to those who set their inward life and their will to a better wisdom and a better will than their own. "When thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself; when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee."

In early manhood we feel ourselves free and think we can do as we please, and all things seem possible to us. We gird ourselves and walk whither we will. We think our life is in our own power and that we can make of it pretty much what we please. As we grow older we find that there are many barriers and limitations about us which we had not seen, we learn that we have to live and work under conditions which have been made for us and which we cannot alter. The limits of our freedom and our strength begin to make themselves felt, and, with increasing clearness as the years pass, we see how definite and rigid they are. That which looked soft and yielding before we touched it we find hard and unyielding as iron. That sense of freedom of power and possibility which early manhood and womanhood carry, if they are vigorous and sound, is very good. Few things abash us then; we think we can do, if not all, at least the larger part of what we want to do. We are ready for large plans and great ventures. But the hopefulness and enterprise of young men are not so much due to their greater courage and resolution. Men of middle age have more resolution and courage generally, and they are stronger and tougher in character than young men. It is rather that young men have not found the limits of their strength, nor do they do know the hardness of the stuff in which they will have to work.

As we stand at the gate of manhood we dream our dreams and form our plans; we set before us, perhaps, some definite piece of work we mean to do, or some position we mean to win; and in that affluence of hope and confidence which belong to youth we feel sure that we shall achieve all we purpose. There may be difficulties in our way, but we shall overcome them; the material out of which we shall build our house of life will yield to touch or blow. But when we get a little way on with the task we find that we cannot carry things as easily as we had imagined, that circumstances are not as yielding as we had supposed they would be. We come against some hard immovable barrier and we have to change our course, or we find a hundred delicate threads about us which we had not seen at first, everyone of them helping to hold us to a certain place.

Sometimes, too, we weave bonds in early years which bind us in later years. We do something of which we think little at the time, but it puts a chain about our feet which we cannot break. Or, we did not take some step which we should have taken and we are hampered in consequence for many a year; we missed the rising tide and we are left in the shallows, from which we never wholly get free.

And things break in on us with the inevitableness of fate, and we can do nothing with them. Our plans are struck and broken irreparably. Sickness, accident, loss come, and we can do little or nothing against them; they change the currents of our lives, they put bands of iron on us which cripple us in unexpected ways. We meant to do this or that, but something happened and we could not. A single thread runs unexpectedly into a life and changes the whole pattern of it. Some men drop bit by bit their plan of life; they find that they cannot work to it. They drop one by one their hopes and ambitions; they see that they will never come to fruition. Their field of action, if not of interest, has grown much smaller than they once hoped it would be.

Some of you have found in your own experience the truth of all this. You have been girded with forces you could not break, and carried whither you would not, and set down in conditions you could not alter. You do not stand to-day where you thought, twenty years ago, you would be; your life is not of the complexion and texture you had pictured it and meant to make it. You thought twenty or thirty years ago that you would have gained such a point by this time; you haven't gained it. You thought you would have done some work you meant to do; you haven't done it; and you are thinking, to-day, that you never will do it. Want of health has crippled some of you; business has not gone as prosperously with some of you as you anticipated, you thought you would be free by this time from its heavier burdens and anxieties, but you are not. The chances you were counting on have not come to you. You know now what your work will be to the end of the day, and you know what your place will be and what the colour of your life will be. You have been made to walk in paths you would not, and you must tread them now till the end of the journey.

Now we think sadly of all this at times, these bonds and straits seem to take off so much of the good of life. Life would be so much richer and we, ourselves, so much happier if we were not shut in as we are. And, indeed, they do make life harder and barer; they take some of the warmer and brighter colours out of it. And they call, sometimes, for great patience and great courage. It is no small victory to have reconciled ourselves, once for all, to a lot made for us by circumstances very different from that which we had planned for ourselves. Still this girding of our life is not, or need not be, all loss to us. There is good for some men and women in being shut in to a narrow round of work. Too large a circle, in which we are free to do as we please, has its dangers, Our energies get dissipated and our interests too many for any of them to take deep root. Many interests are good, it is good to be able to turn this way and that; and yet a man may touch more things than he can manage, he may light more fires than he can keep burning, and this tends to shallowness of character. We can frequently see how the opportunity to follow vagrant purposes, to indulge caprice or fancy, spoils character. Many men and women would do much better with themselves were they less free to please themselves. More pressure on them from without, tighter girding from without, would have made their life and character more solid. We think with regret how many things we should like to do which we cannot; but it might only mean, if we could do them, that we should have less energy and care for the things we have in hand. We must be pinned down—some of us—to one or two things, if we are to do anything. And this is what God does with us; He shuts us in some narrow place and He says to us, "Stand and work there." He gives us a single task and He bids us do that alone.

And then again it is good to remember that it is not the channel into which we pour our life that is the main thing, but the kind of life we pour through the channel that is open to us; it is not the web of circumstances in which we are placed, but what we do within it. It would make little or no difference to the real quality of our life, to the temper in which we live, and the aims which dominate us, if we were set to-morrow in a larger world and given quite other, and as we judge, better work to do than that we have. We easily make too much of the particular stage on

which we play our part, and think that another stage would mean another character. The stage may affect our comfort, our pleasure and interest, but it does not really and deeply affect the quality of our life. It does not really matter whether a man is faithful with five talents or with one ; the great thing is that he be faithful. It does not matter whether a man is brave on the battle-field, or contending for an unpopular truth or policy, or standing up in a workshop alone for right, or bearing quietly and cheerfully a hard lot; is he brave? That is everything. It does not matter whether a man is generous with pence or with pounds. One man out of his abundance gives a hundred or a thousand pounds, and another out of his need gives a shilling ; the men may be equally generous, the smaller gift as great really as the greater gift. One thinks tenderly of the man in the parable who had but one talent ; one can understand his disappointment, and one can imagine him thinking that it was hardly possible to make a life worth anything with only one talent. It would seem to him so much easier to use five talents faithfully than one. And the man with five talents would think that it would be far easier to be faithful with one than with five. Five talents or one talent may make a difference to the zest and pleasure with which we live and work, but it will make little difference to the moral pitch of life. We say of some men that there is more in them than they have put out ; they have not had opportunity to do their best work. Still that it is in them to do more is the chief thing. God will find them opportunity somewhere and sometime to put forth their best.

There is another thing to be remembered. These girdings and restraints do for us, if we take them in the right way, what they did for Peter. They take the wilfulness and self-assertion out of us, they discipline us to humility and self-control. Peter, as an old man with his bonds and marks of suffering on him, his meek wisdom and modest courage and trustful endurance, is a finer man than when we first meet with him. He is simpler, gentler, stronger. The metal having been in the furnace and under the hammer is wrought to a finer temper. If we resent these restraints of circumstances, if we are fretful and rebellious under them, then, indeed, we are the worse for them, and life may turn more and more to bitterness and disappointment. But if we accept them and do our best with them, if we can still believe that God is good, and that life is good, and the fruit of it shall be good, they carry blessing in them for us. So accept our lot trustfully and cheerfully to live and work within our limits without protest and without bitterness—this is a blessed achievement. To ask less and less for ourselves and to be able to give more, to care increasingly for the greater ends of life, to be able to give more and endure more for these, is really to come to the best that life can give us. Girded manhood with its pains and straits is better than free, careless, and happy youth.

Science by the Sea Shore.

BY J. H POYNTING, D.SC.

There is nothing more restful to the tired body and mind than to sit by the sea on a sunny summer day and watch the unceasing march of the waves shorewards. Like the "flock of sheep that leisurely pass by, one after one," by which Wordsworth taught us to court sleep, the waves rolling in, "one after one," and losing themselves in their endless struggle for victory against the land, have a soothing effect on the mind, they put our faculties to sleep and we can simply rest and enjoy existence.

Yet, if we rouse ourselves, these waves give us much food for thought. Whence comes the power which they spend in hurling themselves on the beach, whence the power which enables the race, though each wave may perish, to win the battle and slowly gain, step by step, on the land, undermining the cliffs and grinding their rough fragments to smooth and harmless pebbles. Let us try to trace back this power, the soul, as it were, of the waves, animating them and giving them all their activity ; let us try to imagine what transmigrations it has undergone before it took up its dwelling in the waves.

We will suppose that it is a breezy day and that the wind is driving the waves before it to curl as breakers on the shore. The wind clearly makes the waves. The air sweeps over the water,

getting entangled in the surface, and making ripples. These it pushes up into wavelets and, finally, into waves. But in doing this the air loses some of its motion and moves less quickly than it would if gliding over a smooth sea. Making the waves it yields up part of its energy of motion to them, and this is the energy, the power, which the waves carry with them to the shore.

But whence did the air gain its energy? We are still unable to follow out in all its detail the making of a wind, but there is no doubt about the general nature of the process. The sunlight falling on the surface of the earth is there changed into heat, and the heat is shared with the air resting on the earth. Becoming lighter, the air moves up and fresh air moves in to takes its place, and, so, a circulation begins which in time converts the heat energy into energy of motion, the power residing in the wind. The sunlight may have fallen on the earth days or weeks before its energy appears in the battering of the waves on the shore, and it may have come hundreds or even thousands of miles in its embodiment in the wind. But, as sunlight, its life was shorter, though it travelled over a vastly greater distance. For it was light only about eight minutes while it quivered through the ninety million miles of space separating us from the sun. Up to the instant of starting on its flight it was heat in the atmosphere of the sun. So that the power which grinds our coasts was no long time ago heat nearly a hundred million miles away in the sun. Then, transformed to light, it darted through space and, falling on the earth, became heat once more. Passing into the air it gradually changed to motion, and entering the water as motion it was at last wasted, though in no way lost, on the sea-shore.

If we try to go still further back and seek the source of the sun's heat we can only guess. Long ago it was thought the sun was a burning fire, getting its heat from chemical union like the coal fires on our hearths. But now we are almost certain that the sun is far too hot to burn, too hot for any chemical union to take place. We know, too, that if the heat came from mere burning it would be utterly inadequate to keep up the supply through the long ages that the sun has certainly shone. Later it was thought that a continual bombardment of the sun by shooting stars, or meteorites, might replenish his store, the energy of motion of the falling meteorites changing into energy of heat. But now it is generally believed that the heat is supplied by a transformation going on within the sun itself, that the various parts are pulling each other together, and that the globe is gradually shrinking. This pulling together generates energy of motion just as the pulling of a cloud of rain-drops on to the earth generates energy of motion in the drops. But in the sun, already compact, the motion is checked as rapidly as it is formed, and the energy is changed to heat. If this explanation is true, the sun's heat was once attraction energy, that energy which is always seeking to turn itself into energy of motion, and move bodies nearer together. We have this attraction energy in a stone before it falls, or a stream before it rushes down its bed, and we know that unless we support the stone or bank up the stream the attraction energy will change into motion. We cannot yet form any accurate notion of the time the sun has thus fed upon himself, transforming his attraction store into motion, then into heat, and then throwing it out into space as light. Nor can we do more than guess at the shrinkage which has so far gone on. It appears at least possible that once the matter of the sun was diffused through a vast part of space, and cold, andthat gradually it shrank together, growing hotter as it shrank, since the heat was evolved from attraction energy more rapidly than the light was sent out. Even now it may be that the sun is growing hotter, and he may do so for ages to come. But it would seem that at last his heat expenditure will exceed his income and he will cool. There seems some ground for this history, in the fact that there are in the heavens now vast clouds like scattered dust—apparently the raw material of suns—stars with clouds round them, far on the way to make suns, and suns already made hot like ours, and many doubtless hotter still. There are, we know, stars now dark, which we may well suppose are dead or dying suns.

Coming back to the shore, there is another set of waves which derive their power through a very different channel—the tides rising and falling every twelve hours. They are as truly

waves as the breakers, though immensely longer and far slower in their rise and fall. If these waves do not help much directly in the struggle against the land they aid the breakers by giving them continually fresh points of attack. Like a gigantic planing machine the sea has a slow forward and backward motion in the tides, which enables the working tool, the line of breakers, to travel over a large area and gradually plane it down. Let us now try to trace the tidal energy and see how it has come into the waves where we see it manifested. We know that the chief part of the tides is due to the moon—the lesser part due to the sun we need not think of now. These tides are long waves sweeping round the earth and following the moon from east to west; more exactly they follow the moon from west to east, but as the earth is travelling still more rapidly from west to east, the tides appear to move against it. As they beat against the shore they act as a kind of brake, but the power they manifest is derived in truth from the earth whose spin they are resisting, just as the power of the chisel in the lathe is derived from the spinning of the wood which it is cutting. Now as the earth has no source of power to renew its spin, the tides must be slowly stopping it and lengthening out the day. The energy it loses reappears in the tides and is finally scattered on the coasts and in the seas. But clearly the earth cannot put a brake on to itself. Even if the brake begin to act, soon earth and brake would be whirling round together, and thenceforward the spin would be unchanged. Here, however, there is another body, the moon, and we may imagine an invisible handle reaching from here to the moon by which the moon puts on the brake. But as it presses, as it were, against the handle to keep the earth back, it is, in turn, pressed forward. The result is that the earth gives up some of its spin to the moon, which is in the first place hurried forward, so that if it kept at the same distance it would get round the earth more quickly. But the rapid motion enables the moon to overcome the pull of the earth in some degree so that it gets further away and moves round in a larger circle, taking a longer time to get round. In short, as the day lengthens the month lengthens with it.

Professor George Darwin has taught us to see in this tidal action the most powerful factor in the development of our system. Going further and further back, the day and month were shorter and shorter, and probably many, many million years ago they were of the same length, and the moon was spinning round close to the earth. It is no great step beyond this to suppose that a little further back in time the earth and moon were one, that in some way a piece broke off the parent planet to form a satellite, and that tidal action on the parent, due to the offspring, gradually stopped the spin of the parent on the one hand and pushed out the offspring on the other.

We may guess that some similar history might be given in the case of our solar system as a whole. Indeed, such a history has long been suspected and attempts have been made to recall its main features in the Nebular Hypothesis of Kant and Laplace, though that history must now be re-written. If this guess has any foundation in fact, the spinning round of the earth is but a part of the spinning round of the parent mass which has given birth to all the planets, and now remains in their midst to rule their movements and give them light and warmth. The energy of the tides coming from the spinning energy of the earth is but a part of the spinning energy of the primeval cloud of dust from which our system has evolved.

We can see, then, in imagination, two streams of power coming down through the ages from the original nebula. One began in the attraction energy of the scattered particles of matter, changed into motion, and then became heat. Sooner or later it changed to light and journeyed through space. Then it changed to heat again, and lastly to the motion, which is manifested in the throwing-up of the sea-weed on the beach. The other stream began in some whirling motion of the nebula, and remained a whirling motion, at first in the parent sun, later in the earth, till it was changed to the energy which makes the water creep every minute nearer to our feet.

Thus our meditation has taken us far back in the story of our earth and sun, to a time so far distant that all must have been different, and the present almost ceases to be a guide

to the past. But yet, with all its uncertainty, the story is a fascinating one, and I only hope that I have succeeded in inspiring some interest in it in the readers of this paper.

Historic Notes on Midland Churches.

No. I.

It is intended that this column shall from month to month contain brief records, ministerial successions, and other interesting historical notes concerning the Churches in the Provincial Assembly of the Midland Christian Union. Suggestions, corrections, and any valuable facts of general Congregational interest are cordially invited. At present the place formerly filled by the *Monthly Repository*, the *Christian Reformer*, the *Disciple*, &c., in the matter of historic records is empty, and as historians now gratefully turn to those old and valuable volumes for the treasures placed therein by the Messrs. Aspland and others, so in years to come our successors may in like manner seek and find some facts in the columns of the *Seed Sower*.

GEORGE EYRE EVANS

Whitchurch-in-Salop,
7th October, 1893.

BIRMINGHAM—CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH.

Ministers.

LOWER MEETING HOUSE (?)

— Sillitoe	1692-1704
Thomas Pickard	1705-1747

NEW MEETING HOUSE.

Samuel Bowman	1732-1754
Samuel Blyth	1747-1791
William Hawkes	1754-1780
Joseph Priestley, LL.D.	1780-1791
John Edwards	1791-1802
David Jones *	1792-1795
John Kentish	1803-1853
Joshua Toulmin, D.D.	1804-1815
James Yates	1817-1826
John Reynell Wreford, D.D. ...	1826-1831
Samuel Bache	1832-1862

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH.

Samuel Bache	1862-1868
Henry Enfield Dowson, B.A. ...	1863-1867
Henry William Crosskey, LL.D. ...	1869-1893
Richard Thomas Nicholson, B.A...	1889-1892
James Crossley	1892-

Historic Note.

The present Church was built by the congregation which had previously worshipped in the New Meeting House, Moor Street, erected in place of the one burnt down in 1791, during the Church and King Riots, when Dr. Priestley's house and laboratory were also destroyed. But little is known of the earliest, or "Lower Meeting House;" if any records existed, they probably perished in 1791. The foundation stone of the Church of the Messiah was laid by Timothy Kenrick, Esq., on Saturday, the 11th August, 1860. The following document is deposited in the foundation stone, together with some coins, local papers, and a plan of the Church and Schools:—"The Church of the Messiah. This Building, of which the Foundation-stone is this day laid, is dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, by the Congregation of Christian Worshippers now assembling in the New Meeting-house, Moor Street, Birmingham; once under the pastoral care of the illustrious Dr. Priestley, throughout the entire term of his residence in this town; and from the year 1803, for fifty years, under that of the late eminently learned and pious, the Reverend John Kentish. The present Members of this Congregation address their worship to God the Father alone; honouring, but not worshipping, His Son Jesus Christ, by acknowledging that through him they have access to the Father. Desirous of maintaining inviolate the Christian liberty which they themselves enjoy, and of transmitting it unimpaired to their descendants, they leave this House of Worship free and unfettered. Avowing and exercising their own distinct profession of belief, they prescribe no profession whatever for others, but have faith in truth and in the God of truth, that if His Word have free course it will be glorified." The Church was "dedicated on New Year's Day, 1862," the Rev. Thomas Madge preaching the first sermon. The cost was about £12,000, and accommodation is afforded for 600 adults and 250 scholars. An engraving of the exterior, by S. A. Poeti, is prefixed to the Rev. Samuel Bache's brochure on "Miracles, the Credentials of the Christ." London: Whitfield, 1863.)

REFERENCES.—"Sketch of the History of Presbyterian Nonconformity in Birmingham." (Rev. J. R. Wreford, 1832.)

* cf. J. Kenrick's Memoir of Chas. Wellbeloved 1860 p 8.

"Protestant Nonconformity, with an account of the rise and present state of its various Denominations in Birmingham. (Rev. J. Angell James, 1849.)

Christian Reformer, 1860. No. 189, pp. 576-578.
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Christian Life, 1889. 19th January.
"Centenary of the Church of the Messiah Sunday Schools, Birmingham." (Herbert New, junr., 1888.)

"The Fashions."

In former days each country had its own mode of dress, generally dictated by the necessities of the climate or of local production. These national costumes, picturesque, solid, and durable, were transmitted from generation to generation. Now-a-days, society, everywhere, has the same general style of dress, but the fashions, especially among women, change every Spring. A famous dressmaker invents a new cut, and, from Paris to Shanghai, from London to San Francisco, everyone will adopt it, discarding the costumes of the previous year. There are many different evils traceable entirely to these fluctuations of fashion.

First, they engender frivolity and distract the mind from matters with which it ought to be occupied. "Those who pride themselves on being elegant are obliged to occupy a considerable portion of their time with their clothes, and to study them in a way which assuredly does not tend to elevate the mind, or to render it capable of great things." This is the moral evil.

The economic evil is well described by J. B. Say:—"Fashion is privileged to consider things useless which have not yet come to be so, things, often, which have not even lost their freshness: fashion multiplies consumption, and condemns what is still in excellent condition, convenient, it may be pretty, to be no longer good for anything. Thus the rapid changes of fashion impoverish a state both by what they consume and by what they do not consume." For the manufacturer of any new designs in silk, wool, or cotton, there are, first, expenses in the way of models, cartoons, printing rollers, and I know not what beside. All that does not sell in the same year becomes sale-stock, to be cleared off at low prices; some goods are not fancied, remain unsold, and go at last at half-price. All these outlays and all these losses must, at last, be covered by the proceeds of sale, or the manufacturer will be ruined and will cease to produce. The changes of fashion thus considerably increase the price of all articles which are subject to them.

Suppose we had, as formerly, an unvarying national costume, the current manufacture of material it would require could be done at much less cost than that of the thousands of different styles which every year break out in the Spring and Winter fashions. The Queen of Roumania is trying to induce the ladies of her country to adopt the delightful costume of the Wallachian peasantry, and she, herself, is setting the example. "What?" you will say; "you wish to condemn us to stupifying monotony and to deprive us of the piquancy of novelty! Do you then believe that the best use mankind can make of capital, science, and taste, is to place them at the services of the purveyors of fashions? Have women nothing better to do than to invent new combinations for their toilette, to talk incessantly about dress and fashion, and to envy each other the possession of such things?

It is possible to conceive of garments suited to the seasons of the year which would combine in a high degree comfort and elegance. Material, cut, and colours would all be decided on æsthetic lines and on hygienic principles. This once done, it should be everywhere kept to.

In England, a society of ladies has been formed to forward the introduction of rational dress.

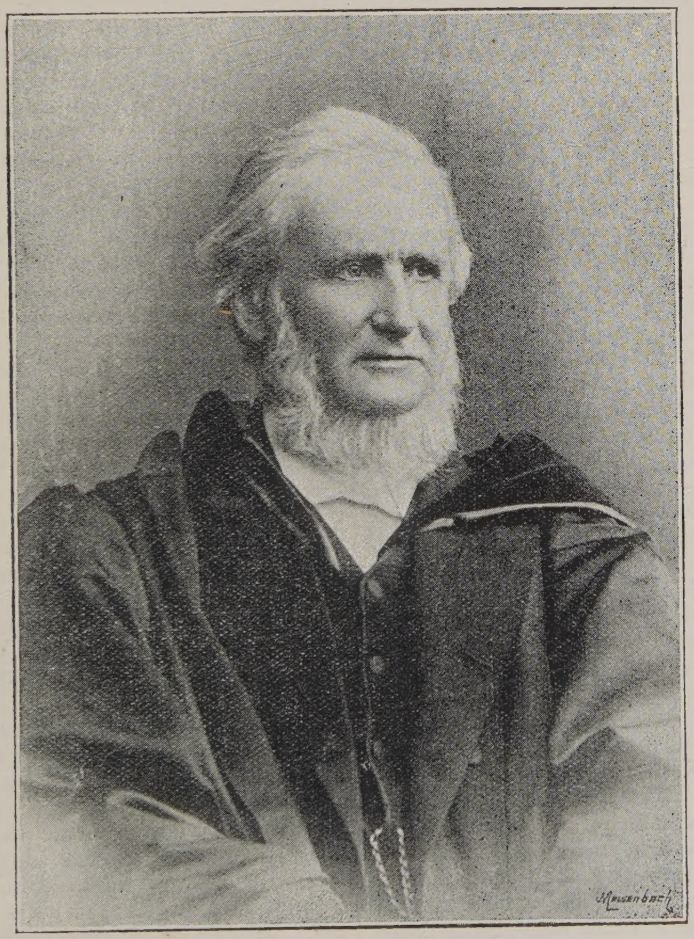
But already I hear it said, "Good heavens! why not give us at once the gown of the Carmelite or the robe of the Capuchin?"

I reply, first, that it was a profound and far-reaching idea which imposed on religious orders a costume which has remained unchanged for eighteen centuries. It is a means by which the human soul is withdrawn, at least on one side, from the region of those futilities in which vanity takes delight, that it may be more free to rise towards the level of things eternal. Further, let us not forget that, from the most ancient Greek vases down to frescoes in the catacombs of the third and fourth centuries, ancient art presents to us figures all clad in the same manner.

EMILE DE LOVELEYE.

Dr. Crosskey.

The first number of the *Seed Sower* contained an account of "An Interview with Dr. Crosskey." The interviewer well remembers how bright was the Doctor's speech, how hopeful his spirit, what interest he displayed in the starting of the *Seed Sower*, how full he was of schemes of work! Alas! nine months have only passed and our friend and leader is no more. The loss to our Midland churches is great and irreparable. For years he had been our real, although unmitred, bishop. He gave his services as freely to the smallest



THE LATE REV. W. H. CROSSKEY, LL.D.

churches in our midst as to the largest. His presence, counsel, and enthusiasm often redeemed our gatherings from dulness, despondency, and failure. He was felt to be the personal friend of every minister in our midst, and often shall we "sigh for the touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still."

We are sure that our readers will be glad to have reproduced the admirable portrait we published in our first number, and will feel it most fitting that our present number should

be largely devoted to a record of his life and a commemoration of his work, character, and influence.

MEMOIR.

Dr. Crosskey was born at Lewes, in Sussex, on the 7th of December, 1826. After completing the ordinary school course, he entered at Manchester New College, London, for the purpose of studying for the Unitarian ministry. Here, amongst the professors, he had the advantage of instruction, with others, under Dr. James Martineau and Mr. Francis W. Newman (elder brother of the late Cardinal Newman). On leaving college, at the close of 1848, he received as his first ministerial charge the pastorate of Friargate Chapel, Derby, an important appointment for a young man of twenty-two. At Derby, Mr. Crosskey showed the first indications of the zeal for popular education which characterised his life by taking an active part in the work of the Public School Association, promoted by Mr. Cobden and others, and which aimed at much the same objects as those successfully advocated some twenty years later by the National Education League, in which also Mr. Crosskey, then in Birmingham, was an ardent and valuable worker. In 1852, a wider opportunity opened itself to Mr. Crosskey, by the offer of the pastorate of the Unitarian congregation at Glasgow. This offer was accepted, and in Glasgow Mr. Crosskey remained for seventeen years. His work there was by no means confined to ministerial duties. He was ardent in the promotion of an unsectarian national system of education, and was examined on behalf of its advocates by the Royal Commission on National Education in Scotland. In many ways he was a prominent figure of Glasgow life, and it was with deep regret that his Glasgow friends parted with him in 1869. They would gladly have retained him, but in the year just mentioned the death of the Rev. Samuel Bache vacated the pastorate of the Church of the Messiah in Birmingham, the direct successor of the New Meeting with which the name of Dr. Priestley is inseparably associated. The pastorate was offered to Mr. Crosskey and accepted by him as opening a sphere of even greater usefulness than that which he filled at Glasgow. From that time until the day of his death, a period of twenty-four years, Dr. Crosskey's connection with Birmingham remained unbroken, intimate, and influential. It is impossible to speak adequately of his services to the Church of the Messiah, or of the affection in which he was held by a deeply attached congregation. All the institutions of the church received from his energy and resource an impetus which made them widely beneficial. But he could not confine his labours within the walls of a church. The town became the sphere of his ministry. He was at one time or another prominent in almost all the literary and scientific movements which occurred in Birmingham, and in the institutions which embodied them—the Philosophical Society, the Natural History Society, and the Birmingham Library serving as examples. It was, however, in the work of education in all its aspects that his heart was engaged, and to this unremitting efforts were applied. When the Education League was formed he was intimately associated in it with Mr. Dixon, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Collings, and others; and, in conjunction with his intimate friend, Dr. Dale, he rendered most valuable service to the cause of educational progress by the establishment and conduct of the Nonconformist Central Committee, which had its headquarters in Birmingham. In 1876 he was elected a member of the School Board constituted under the Education Act of 1870, and at election after election since that time he was again returned as a member of the Board, his connection with it ending only by his resignation after his prolonged illness of last year, when physical strength was no longer adequate to the heavy duties to be discharged. How serious and onerous these duties were, and how devotedly and with what absolute self-sacrifice they were fulfilled, only his colleagues through a long term of years can adequately say. In 1882 he received the honorary degree of LL.D. from the University of Glasgow, in consideration of his eminent educational labours and scientific attainments. Later on he was appointed one of the Governors of King Edward's School—a school which includes among its old boys the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Durham. In 1891 he

filled the chair of President to the British and Foreign Association, an honour never before conferred on a minister of the denomination. He was at that time, however, suffering from the illness which was all too certain to lead to his death.

ILLNESS AND DEATH.

In 1890 symptoms of a serious nature gave his friends much concern, and under medical advice he wintered in the Riviera. He derived great benefit from his stay in a sunnier clime, and came back full of life and energy. But in renewing his old work the strain proved too much for his strength, and one by one he had to lay aside his public duties. It was still believed by his friends that, with restricted work and with the exercise of reasonable care, he might for some years to come still be permitted to render valuable service to his beloved congregation if not to the town at large. On Saturday, Sept. 26th, he joined his Sunday School teachers in their annual excursion to Whitacre, and after tea made a little speech full of animation, in which he laughingly refused to acknowledge himself an old man. On the following Wednesday he attended a meeting of the Governors of King Edward's School, and he then showed much of his old familiar manner, manifested a strong interest in and a vigorous grasp of the business in hand, and said that he felt himself virtually restored to health : signs of renewed strength which were noted with marked appreciation and pleasure by his friends, and which inspired them with even something more than a hopeful feeling as to his future. On the same day he began his removal from Gough Road to a house he had purchased in Wheeley's Road. On Friday he complained of internal pain, but did not allow his physician to be sent for. On Saturday morning, while seated in his study preparing a sermon on "Nonconformity," which, in view of the Church Congress, he had announced for Sunday evening, October 1st, at the Church of the Messiah, an alarming seizure of cramp in the stomach suddenly occurred. Medical help was immediately summoned, and for some time nothing could relieve the pain and distress. Later in the day came a little ease, and it was hoped if the crisis had not passed over there was at least some chance of recovery. But it was not to be : the alarming symptoms recurred in the night, and at an early hour on that peaceful Sunday morning he passed from toil and suffering "to where beyond these voices there is peace."

THE FUNERAL.

Largely attended, not only by many personal friends, but men representative of nearly all the churches and institutions of the town, was held at the Church of the Messiah, on Thursday morning, October 5th. The spacious church was filled in every part, and the occasion was most impressive. The Revs. J. Crossley and Joseph Wood conducted the service. After singing Ellerton's noble hymn, "God of the living, in whose eyes," Mr. Crossley read a beautiful selection of passages from Scripture. The choir then sang Milman's "Brother ! thou art gone before us," to Sullivan's setting. Mr. Wood, who during the singing of the anthem had entered the flower-decked pulpit, addressed the congregation as follows :—We meet to-day under the shadow of a sad bereavement. A leader has fallen on the field ; a torch that burned brightly for our pilgrim feet has been quenched in the night ; a servant of humanity, "radiant with ardour divine," whose words often refreshed and re-inspired us, has gone the road of death to the rest of God. Nevermore will this place echo with his voice, who ministered here for nearly a quarter of a century. Never again in this life shall we see that well-known slender figure, that good grey head, that beautiful countenance, touched of late with lines of pain ; never again shall we meet that ready sympathy with the enthusiasms that stir the hearts of men ; never again will our failures in service be rebuked by his conscientious devotion to the highest interests of his fellow citizens, nor will the discouraged take heart of grace once more from his hopeful spirit. Great is our loss. The open-eyed prophet, the tender-hearted friend, the loyal comrade, the ever-eager student, the fearless and chivalrous worker for truth, righteousness, and humanity, the compassionate helper of the weary and heavy-laden—all which made up that splendid vitality—is taken from us, and nothing is left but a precious memory and a noble example. We cannot but have sorrow of heart when we think how death has

impoverished us. For to many of you he had been so much; he had influenced your lives greatly; he had taught you to love the search for truth; he had given you a fruitful idea of human service; he had stood by your side in hours of grief, ministering comfort to the lonely and stricken heart; his faith and hope have borne up your fainting souls as a full stream bears up the frail craft on its waters. In the close and tender intercourse which exists between a true pastor and his people, you had learned what a rich, brotherly, sympathetic nature lay behind a certain shy and reserved manner. To you also was it given to know, not only his intellectual vigour and undaunted courage, but the quiet graces of humility, reverence, serenity, and peace, of which those who only knew him as a combatant never dreamed. You felt that here was one who, with little talk of such things on his lips, had been with Jesus, had caught the Master's spirit, had found, like Him, his meat and drink in doing the Father's will. Great, indeed, is your loss. But what a joy and comfort it is to think of the blessing he was to you, and to many. God gave gifts to men by him—precious gifts of character, example, and influence. No one could be long in his company without the consciousness that he had stepped across a line inside which there was a more transparent sincerity, a finer moral atmosphere, touches of a sweeter grace, and a higher aim than he found in the ordinary world. To be admitted to his intimacy was to enter a place of hallowed peace and earnest endeavour. His influence was never weakened by the pitiful consciousness of half-hearted beliefs. His creed was simple, but was intensely held. His was a glowing nature, a soul tempered with fire. He could not be a passive and indifferent spectator of all the strenuous movements of the age. And the cause he espoused, he espoused warmly. Like Browning, he was "ever a fighter"—

> One who never turned his back but march'd breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake.

Turn from your personal relations with him to his public work. You know how impatient he was of the low tone of cynical indifference to public duty which marks so many of the well-to-do. He held that a man's religion should show itself not only in the affections of the home and the integrities of business, but in work for the community. He was one of that noble band of men who five-and-twenty years ago gallantly upheld a lofty standard of civic life. It seemed to him that men were traitors to their gifts and opportunities, to their fellows and their God, when they had no faith in fairer days opening on the tired earth, and lent no aid to efforts for bringing in a purer justice, a larger freedom, and a wider knowledge. He could not confine his own labours within the walls of a church or the boundaries of a sect. He believed it was the Church's part to throw herself with ardour into those social, sanitary, æsthetic, and educational movements which promised to make the city he lived in a little more like the city of God he lived for. He believed he was never doing better the work of a Christian minister than when he was busy night and day, busy with multitudinous labours, in building up a great system of schools for the children of Birmingham. John Wesley once said, "The world is my parish." Dr. Crosskey might have said, "The children of Birmingham are my parish." He never doubted that in his educational labours he was as truly working for the Kingdom of God as when he led your devotions in this house of prayer, and gave Christ's message from this pulpit. He had a vivid conception of what a city like Birmingham might become—a conception that dominated all the later utterances of his public life. With imaginative power he thought of this city as a being with its own capacities and responsibilities, possessed as a whole of qualities mighty for good. The corporate personality of a great city was to him no figure of speech. He believed in the large possibilities of corporate life and action for humanising, sweetening, and uplifting the life of the common people. The faith of the city as a whole in progress, freedom, in good work, the spirit of responsibility so widely diffused, the spirit of trust in man, the spirit of hopefulness, which marks the corporate life of Birmingham, seemed to him Divine things.

And it may be truly said that he was a martyr to that large and Divine idea. For there is little doubt he might have been with us for many a year to come had he not worn himself out in the effort to lighten the dark places of the city with knowledge, and to bring the blessings of the highest education possible into the humblest homes. And Church and city, personal friends, loved fellow workers, comrades in many a fight, and many grateful souls owing much of their excellence to him, are left to mourn an irreparable loss. Yet, in the midst of tears, we raise our thanksgiving. The pang which makes the parting with such a man—so upright, so devoted, so large-hearted, so self-sacrificing—irrepressibly sorrowful as it is, must yet, after the first bitterness is overpast, yield to thoughts of chastened gladness. We rejoice that God gave him to us for so long. We look back on all these years of service and sunshine with delight. Among our chiefest treasures now we count his memory and influence. And as for him, where can a good man be better than in the nearer presence of God—in company with the just and loving for ever? Gone is he from our gaze, yet is he not still here? Are they not often present with us, the great and the good through whom God has blessed us? Does not their word sound in our ears? Does not their ideal and example inspire us?" Mr. Wood then led the congregation in prayer, and the service concluded with Whittier's hymn, "God giveth quietness at last." The "Dead March" throbbed in sympathy with the general grief as the coffin, with its canopy of flowers, was carried from the church and placed upon the open hearse which was to convey the body on its last journey. A train of about twenty carriages followed it to Kingswood. In the little settlement formed two hundred years ago by some of the persecuted Presbyterians; near the little meeting house which stands on the site of that which was burned—like that of Dr. Crosskey's illustrious predecessor—during the Priestley riots; in the burial ground where lie the remains of some of Birmingham's foremost citizens, the bones of one more champion of religious and intellectual freedom were laid. With a simple ceremony, the reading of a few verses of Scripture by Mr. Wood, a short prayer by Mr. Crossley, the body was committed to the earth. The flowers sent by those nearest and dearest to the departed were buried with his mortal remains in the deep brick grave which is to be the family sepulchre. The other wreaths, which would have more than filled the grave, were spread out in the little chapel. There they will lie for a time, giving out a fragrance sweet, but not sweeter than the beautiful memory they typify, and teaching in their lovely symbolism the lesson which was set forth as the keynote of the funeral service, in words taken from Dr. Crosskey's book on "Rational Piety," published only a fortnight before his death:—"The incompleteness of the noblest life that can be led on earth confirms our faith that there is a life within our minds and hearts and souls over which the grave can have no power."*

TRIBUTES.

On the following Sunday reference was made in many of the pulpits of the town to the life and work of Dr. Crosskey, and special memorial services were held at the Church of the Messiah, when eloquent and pathetic tributes were paid to the character and ministry of our friend by the Revs. Enfield Dowson and James Crossley.

MR. DOWSON'S TRIBUTE.

At the morning service Mr. Dowson began by referring to the close personal ties which are formed in the course of a long and faithful ministry; of the tender, quickening power of the words and the loving sympathy of him who was gone: of the inspiration and comfort which he had given for so long by his speech both in public and private. "I am sure," said Mr. Dowson, "that by the depth and the strength of these *personal* influences the worth of a minister's work must first and foremost be measured. They form its central and most sacred function. 'The kingdom of God is within you,' said Christ; and *he* is the truest minister of Christ who in the individual lives of his people establishes a living influence that in word and action touches them with a quickening power. The happiest and best fruits of the life

* We are largely indebted to the *Birmingham Daily Post* for this account of Dr. Crosskey's funeral.

of a minister are found in the number of his people who can say, 'He spoke to me words I have never forgotten; he kindled in my soul a new love of all things beautiful, and good, and true; when I was tempted, he strengthened me to do the right and to shun the wrong; when I was in sore stress he was the truest friend I had, helping me and advising me in my difficulty; when I was in deep grief he brought me the sympathy of a loving heart, and the comfort of a soul in which breathed an abiding faith in a Heavenly Father's love in time and in eternity.' How many of you are there here to-day from whom such grateful testimony is ascending as a thanksgiving to Heaven for what the minister of this church, who has departed from your midst, was to you?" Mr. Dowson passed on to notice Dr. Crosskey's interest in and labours for all the agencies and institutions connected with the church. Then he continued:—"And if we pass beyond the relations in which your minister stood to you in your church and Sunday School to the place he held in public life in this great city, and in the country at large, you who have watched day by day his ceaseless energy and activity know best how great they were; you saw in him not alone your spiritual leader, but also one of the most active and able of the citizens of Birmingham, carrying into the life and community to which he belonged the same unfaltering allegiance to truth and right, the same courageous fidelity to his convictions, the same enthusiastic devotion to the good of every man, woman, and child whom he could reach, and the same self-sacrificing earnestness and zeal which inspired his ministry in your church." . . . . "It was not alone in Birmingham, amongst *you*, but in the country he became one of the foremost leaders in the battle for national unsectarian education, and one of the chief representatives of the great body of Nonconformists in their demands for religious equality. No one who read his evidence when he was examined by the National Education Commission, and when he encountered, hour after hour, some of the keenest intellects in England, will soon forget his marvellous mastery of the subject, and the absolute intrepidity and presence of mind with which he encountered opponent after opponent. The battle which he then fought was magnificent. And he was ever ready for such efforts, and seemed almost to revel in such struggles for truth and right. Nor could any man pass away with a nobler monument of his activity than has been raised to him in the splendid results of his labours for the children of Birmingham, in the Board School system that he has done so much to build up and develop, and to make a working model for the other cities of the kingdom." Mr. Dowson next spoke of the work done for the Unitarian denomination generally by the late Dr. Crosskey. "I cannot," he said, "pass by this opportunity which you have given me of bearing testimony to the large place which your beloved minister occupied in the wider life of our community of churches in this country . . . He stood in the front rank with the foremost leaders and standard-bearers of our faith. Throughout the length and breadth of the land, in our various churches, and at our most important meetings, that voice you knew and loved so well was often heard; and that light and active figure and that spiritual face were familiar. Often has he kindled *our* fainting spirits to new enthusiasm by the fire of *his*, and lifted us up to new lights of faith by his prophetic speech. In our counsels he ever took a leader's place, as in our churches and at our larger gatherings, his was the voice that inspired us. No one of our ministers has taken a more important part in our chief organisations, whether in London or the country, or has done more to stimulate and strengthen the united life and missionary spirit of our churches. It is in accordance with the loving allegiance that he has ever borne to his Alma Mater, Manchester College, that he has rendered to it—as visitor and member of its Academical committee—services whose worth it is impossible to exaggerate; and it is to me one of the saddest things of the hour, that he who took so deep an interest in the settlement of the college at Oxford should have passed away on the eve of its opening." After some further remarks, Mr. Dowson concluded:—"I often think that no one is so completely happy as he who dies to leave behind an unsullied name and a bright record. In the midst of the stress of life, so many fall and the battle is not won. But to pass out of it a conqueror is the noblest of earthly consummations, and no better fate can

be wished by us for those we love. It was so that your minister died, and for ever will the name of Henry William Crosskey be beloved and honoured."

MR. CROSSLEY'S TRIBUTE.

At the evening service, the Rev. J. Crossley preached from Rom. xiv., 8. In the course of his remarks, the preacher said: "A noble life is never ended, never ceases to influence other lives, and though we may not be able to trace its abiding consequences through all their ramifications, we may be sure that its influence *does* abide and continues to be exerted through those who first felt it. We could say of Dr. Crosskey, even if we had not a single printed word of his —"he being dead yet speaketh" In this congregation there are many who had lost sight of his official relation to them in the deeper and tenderer relation of a spiritual father. There are many who received their first impulse to a higher life from him; many who owe to him, as God's messenger, their moral salvation. Every true minister of God is a saviour of men. And the large-hearted sympathy, the fervent enthusiasm of humanity which to the last inspired him, gave him especial power over those who knew him. It was the breadth—wide as humanity—of his sympathies that endeared him to his friends, and plunged him into those unceasing labours which have shortened his life on earth . . . Enthusiasm and sympathy —especially broad sympathy—are very apt to run to waste unless kept under rational control and wisely directed. Dr. Crosskey was eminently practical. He knew the tremendous inertia that has to be overcome before men can be moved by a sense of pure justice out o the nets of their prejudices and opinions. He knew that no cold or half-hearted appeal can avail. Burning words, touched it may be with exaggeration, are sometimes necessary to give an impetus to righteous deeds. A stranger, listening to Dr. Crosskey on occasions when he was pouring out his soul in passionate, glowing words, might have made the mistake of supposing that he was listening to a mere dreamer. As a matter of fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Behind his impassioned utterance there was a keen appreciation of what was practicable, and an urgent anxiety to carry his hearers as far as he could in the direction of practical reform." Mr. Crossley spoke of the attitude in which Dr. Crosskey stood to all his work; of the hopefulness—the forward look—which always characterised him; of the great service which he had rendered to the cause of national education, and of the blessings which such work had conferred upon thousands who had never seen his face or heard his voice; and concluded with words of comfort and encouragement to those whose hearts are burdened and pained with the sense of loss. In the course of the sermon the preacher spoke a few words on behalf of the ministers of the Midland District. He said, "Mr. Dowson spoke this morning of Dr. Crosskey's labours for the churches of our denomination throughout the country, and to his generous words I can add nothing; but for a smaller circle I can speak with confidence. Though I am not an official of the Ministers' Monthly meeting, I am sure that my brethren would wish me to give expression, on this occasion, to the warm affection and high regard which they felt fo Dr. Crosskey—our 'Bishop,' as it was our habit to call him. There never was the slightest attempt to assume Episcopal functions, but in a very real sense our departed brother was the Bishop of this District. No minister in trouble, or in need of counsel, ever appealed to him in vain. Whenever appealed to, he gave ungrudgingly of his best help, and whilst his shrewd, good sense and practical experience were invaluable, his gentle sympathy left a still greater sense of obligation behind. We are all grieved that his kindly presence will be with us no more. For he was not merely an occasional visitor at our meetings. Very rarely did he stay away if it were possible for him to be present. He was always welcomed and honoured as a leader whose authority rested upon his loving heart, and his speech was listened to as the utterance of a sincere and noble mind. The friendliness which has been so often referred to, because its influence was so strongly felt, was especially marked in all his relations with his comrades. And they mournfully join to-day in the expressions of heart-felt sorrow which his untimely death has called forth."

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

The Singing Lesson.

A nightingale made a mistake!
She sang a few notes out of tune,
Her heart was ready to break,
And she hid from the moon!
She wrung her claws, poor thing,
But was far too proud to speak,
So tuck'd her head under her wing,
And pretended to be asleep!

A lark, arm-in-arm with a thrush,
Came sauntering up to the place;
The nightingale felt herself blush,
Though feathers hid her face;
She knew they had heard her song,
She *felt* them snigger and sneer,
She thought that this life was too long,
She wish'd she could skip a year!

"O nightingale," coo'd a dove;
"O nightingale! what's the use?
You bird of beauty and love,
Why behave like a goose?
Don't sulk away out of sight
Like common contemptible fowl;
You bird of joy and delight,
Why behave like an owl?

Only think of all you have done,
Only think of all you *can* do;
A false note is really fun
From such a bird as you
Lift up your proud little crest,
Open your musical beak;
Other birds have to do their best,
You need only *speak*."

The nightingale shyly took
Her head from under her wing,
And giving the dove a look,
Straightway began to sing.
There was never a bird could pass,
The night was divinely calm,
The people stood on the grass
To hear that wonderful psalm!

The nightingale did not care,
She only sang to the skies;
Her song ascended there,
And there she fix'd her eyes.
The people that stood below
She knew but little about;
And this story's a moral, I know,
If you'll try to find it out!

"Tommy, The Skylark."

A lady belonging to a family in the South-East of Ireland has recorded some very interesting anecdotes of a pet skylark, to which the name of "Tommy" has been given. This little bird was so tame, that when the family were assembled at breakfast, he would fly upon the table, and walk round, picking up crumbs; and sometimes he would hop up on a loaf, and actually allow a slice to be cut under his feet. It was curious to see him watching the operation of threading a needle. When the thread was put ever so little into the eye, he would seize the end of it, and dexterously pull it through. Sometimes, when one of the three young ladies of the family had fastened the thread to her work, and continued sewing, he would make a sudden plunge at the thread, and pull it out of the needle, then fly out of reach and chuckle over the mischief. Sometimes he would hop on an open workbox, and, seizing the end of a cotton thread, would fly with it to the other side of the apartment, unwinding yard upon yard from the revolving reel. The second of the young ladies to whom we allude was remarkable for the elegance and neatness with which her hair was always braided. This did not escape Tommy's observation, and he frequently made an attack upon it. He would take the end of a ringlet in his bill, and, fluttering before her face, would leave it in the most admired disorder. He would then again chuckle, as we have heard a magpie do after any act of mischief. There remains one trait of sagacity, which those who recollect the entertaining little creature would scarcely pardon us if we omitted. The youngest of the three ladies was accustomed each night, before she retired, to take her candle over to Tommy's cage, to bid him good-night. He would instantly bring his head from under his wing, and standing up, sing one of the most beautiful little songs you could conceive it possible for a little throat like his to warble—a song, too, that he never gave forth on any other occasion. If she attempted to go out of the room without thus coming to bid him good-night, although his head was under his wing, and you thought him asleep, he would instantly scream out to put her in mind. To this may be added the singular fact that he would not sing the same song for any one else who might take a candle to his cage, though he would respond by a chirp to his good-night. What the usual duration of a lark's age is we cannot say. Tommy himself lived a happy life for thirteen years. At length he grew ill; and care and skill were expended on him in vain. He was wrapped in cotton, and placed near the genial warmth of a modeaate fire; yet still he languished. His young friend, for whom he used to sing his sweet good-night, approached him with her candle. He lifted his little head, and, as the dying swan is said to sing, he attempted to warble for her a last farewell. She burst into tears, and retired. In the morning Tommy was dead.

News from the Field.

MANCHESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD.—Undoubtedly the most important event of the past month was the opening of the new buildings in which our chief college is henceforth to have its home. The meetings connected with the opening of the college were spread over two days, October 18th and 19th, and were in every respect successful. The weather was perfect, the audiences were too large for the rooms, the ancient University gave us a friendly welcome, and in the happy meetings of many old friends, an added pleasure was given by the presence of Dr. Martineau. For many of us the meetings would have lost much of their interest had the venerable Doctor been unable to come. It was fitting that his benediction should fall upon the new college, which is yet an old institution, with whose history he has been so int mately associated. He was opposed to the removal of the college to Oxford. Now that the college has been removed, he does not stand aside or sulk in his tent, but comes forward and makes us all glad by his presence among us, and by taking some part in the proceedings. The opening ceremony was fixed for 3-15 p.m. on Wednesday, October 18th. On turning into Mansfield Road, shortly after 3 o'clock, a crowd was to be seen gathered round the new college door. "It's like an extra-door-to-the-pit business—said a gentleman—and they've provided policemen to keep us in order." But a more orderly crowd never assembled, and when the doors were flung open it was surprising to see how little crushing there was. As a rule, when people have a suspicion that there will not be room enough for them they show their anxiety in a way that is unpleasant to witness and unpleasant to experience. Whether the atmosphere of the ancient city had acted as a sedative or not, it is impossible to say, but it is certain that the movement from the road to the Library was a credit to all concerned in it. After the ceremony in the Library, of which full details will be found in the denominational papers, we adjourned to the Chapel for the dedication service. Professors Drummond, Carpenter and Upton conducted the service; the Rev. H. E. Dowson prea hed the sermon; and Dr. Martineau pronounced the benediction. Fortunately well-known tunes had been selected to the hymns, and it would have done some of our orthodox friends good to hear the sound that went up from the crowded chapel. Would that we could have such hearty singing in all our chapels! Would that we were not so often content to praise God by proxy! The inspiration of true congregational singing has yet to be experienced in many of our churches. It soon became known that if Dr. Martineau were well enough, he would conduct the Communion Service on Thursday morning at 10 o'clock. This drew some to the service who would otherwise have liked the morning hours to visit one or more of the ancient colleges of the University. Those who were present at the Communion Service said that it was most impressive and beautiful. Next came an address from Principal Drummond, in which he traced the rise of English Nonconformity and showed the origin of Engli-h Unitarianism. The address, lasting an hour and a quarter, was followed with great attention, the chapel being again crowded. At the luncheon in the afternoon, speeches were made by the Warden of Merton (Hon. J. Brodrick), Sir W. Markly, Canon Freemantle, Professor Dicey, Professor Everitt, of Harvard University, and several of our own ministers and laymen. The proceedings were brought to a close by a Conversazione in the evening. An Organ Recital was given in the Chapel by the organist of Queen's College, and at 9 o'clock the reception in the Library of various congratulatory addresses began. Deputations were present from Harvard University; from the Unitarians of Hungary; the Hibbert Trustees; the Presbyterian Board; Cross Street Chapel, Manchester; and Cairo Street Chapel, Warrington. To all these deputations Professor Carpenter replied in a vigorous and happy speech. The treasurer of the college announced that a lady had promised a stained glass window for the chapel, and that a gentleman had promised £1,000 towards the £5,000 still required to clear the college buildings from debt, on condition that the remainder was raised by Christmas. Thus ended a series of meetings that will be ever memorable in the history of our college, and will be a very pleasant memory to those who were present at them, as long as they live.

A GREAT-GRANDSON OF DR. PRIESTLEY.—A correspondent sends us the following extract from a newspaper, which he wishes us to print, as he thinks it will interest many of our readers. We agree with our correspondent and give the extract with pleasure. "The death is announced of Dr. Aubrey Bowen, of Melbourne, Australia, who was a great-grandson of the famous Dr. Priestley. He was born at Cradley, in Worcestershire where his father, the Rev. Mr. Bowen, who married a grand-daughter of Dr. Priestley, resided as a Unitarian minister. Mr. Bowen afterwards removed to Edgbaston, where he established a school, and where his son Aubrey received his earliest education. Mr. Bowen also acted as minister of the Unitarian Chapel at Kingswood. It will be interesting to our older readers to have it recalled to their minds that two grand-daughters of Dr. Priestley were resident in Birmingham, the other being the wife of a once famous Birmingham man, Mr. Joseph Parkes. Dr. Aubrey Bowen received his medical education in Dublin, and qualified both as a surgeon and physician. The *British Medical Journal* gives the following account of his distinguished professional career:—'Having determined to try his fortune in the colonies he settled at Melbourne, where he soon acquired a great reputation as an ophthalmic surgeon. He became one o the recognised leaders in that speciality in Australasia, his practice not being confined to his own colony, but extending to Tasma ia and New South Wales. So widespread was his fame that we understand he was once summoned to see a case in Japan. In 1869 he founded the Ophthalmic and Orthopædic Institution at Melbourne, which was afterwards amalgamated with the present Eye and Ear Hospital of Victoria. He was himself the architect of the building, and for twenty years he gave his best energies to the service of the poor sufferers who applied there for relief. In 1889 Dr. Bowen was nominated by the Medical Society of Victoria, of which he had been secretary and afterwards treasurer, to represent it at all meetings of kindred associations in Europe and America, which he was then about to visit. He was

appointed a member of the Royal Commission of Victoria to the Universal Exhibition of Paris. For his services in that capacity the Knighthood of the Legion of Honour was conferred on him by the President of the French Republic. In 1891 he was appointed to represent the colony of Victoria at the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography held in London. He was also to have represented the colony of Victoria at the International Medical Congress in Rome. Dr. Bowen died of phthisis. When he became aware that his case was hopeless he determined to come back to die in the old country. He leaves a widow, but no child.

HURST STREET DOMESTIC MISSION, BIRMINGHAM.—The Sunday School Anniversary Services in connection with this mission were held on Sunday, September 24th. Three services were held, Mr. W. J. Clarke conducting each. In the morning the hall was completely filled by the Morning Adult Class and the junior scholars, in the afternoon it was again nearly filled by the Adult Afternoon Class and the junior scholars, and in the evening it was crowded. The services were held in the Hall on this occasion, which has just been very elaborately and beautifully decorated. A profusion of bright and varied colour has been used, but so perfectly harmonising as to produce a very pleasing and artistic effect. An effective feature of the decoration is the division of the walls into panels, in the centre of each being a suitable motto skilfully worked in gold. The mottoes are taken from the Bible, and the Works of Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Coleridge and others. The autumn and winter agencies are now in full swing. In addition to the Sunday schools, the adult classes, and the chapel services, they include entertainments for the people, mothers' meetings, an advice bureau, a drum and fife band, a choral society, a band of hope, sick and savings' clubs, a teachers' preparation class, and classes for instrumental music, dress cutting, type-writing, experimental chemistry, and elementary and advanced physiography. In almost every instance the attendances have so far been most encouraging, this being especially the case with respect to the adult Sunday morning class, the chapel services, the mothers' meetings, and the entertainments for the people. In the case of the mothers' meetings the interest continues to increase, the average attendance having now reached nearly three hundred.

KINGSWOOD.—The Harvest Festival Services were held at Kingswood Chapel on Sunday, October 8th, when sermons were preached by the Rev. J. Hardinge Matthews to large congregations. The decorations were tastefully carried out, and numerous offerings of fruit, flowers, corn, bread, vegetables, etc., were sent by members of the congregation and friends, which have since been distributed to the sick and others. Collections were taken for the Queen's Hospital. The Band of Hope opened its winter session on Wednesday, the 18th, at Kingswood Schools, by a tea party and social meeting. After an excellent tea, various games were played, songs were sung and several readings were given by the Rev. J. H. Matthews. Buns, sweets, etc., were distributed at intervals, and an agreeable evening was spent by the members.

LYE UNITARIAN CHURCH.—The annual Harvest Festival was held on Sunday, October 8th. The chapel was prettily decorated. The anthem was entitled, "Lord of the Harvest," in addition to which two solos and a chorus were sung by the choir. In the evening the chapel was crowded, forms being put down the aisle. There was an equally good congregation on the following Sunday evening when the Harvest Thanksgiving Service was repeated, and a sermon was preached by the Rev. John Harrison, of West Bromwich. A collection was taken in aid of the Hospital Sunday Fund. On Wednesday evening, October 11th, an Astronomical Lecture, dealing with the solar system, was delivered by the minister, the Rev. I. Wrigley, in the schoolroom. At the close of the lecture a very hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Wrigley, with the request that he would give other lectures of a similar kind.

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN UNION AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY.—The Autumnal Conference was held at Kidderminster, on October 16th. At the afternoon meeting the attendance was small. A resolution of sorrow and condolence on the death of Dr. Crosskey was moved by the Rev. H. McKean, seconded by the Rev. P. Dean, and supported on behalf of the laymen by Mr. J. Stych The resolution was passed in silence.—After the roll had been called, the Rev. J. Harrison read a paper on "Christianity outside the churches." A substantial tea was provided by the Kidderminster friends and fortified thereby a good audience assembled in that chapel for the evening meeting. Mr. A. W. Worthington presided. The proceedings began with a hymn, and during the evening the choir sang with excellent effect several anthems. The Rev. J. C. Street, taking up the idea of the afternoon paper, dwelt upon the Parliament of Religions, which had assembled recently in Chicago, and gave utterance to a desire to see the various sects separated by opinion, drawn closer together in the bonds of the spirit. The Rev. J. Crossley's address, which he said was on "Unitarian Apologetics," was a vigorous plea for a little more self-assertion and aggressive conviction on the part of Unitarians generally. The Rev. J. Wood asked for more funds. He explained that the attempt made last Spring to double the income of the Assembly had failed. A large increase in subscriptions had resulted, but not sufficient to warrant the operations which we had in view. It had, however, been decided to open a mission at Small Heath in November. There would be a Sunday Morning Adult School, and a service in the evening. Helpers were on the spot ready to begin, and the outlook was most promising.—A most successful meeting came to a close about half-past nine.

TAMWORTH.—On Sunday, October 15th, the Harvest Services were held, when a very pleasing arrangement was effected as a contrast to the recent illiberal treatment of our minister. The morning services were in the hands of the Rev. J. Howard, who preached on "The Perpetual Law of Progress," as illustrated by the harvest. In the evening an exchange of pulpits with the Congregational minister took place, when the Rev. J. H. Harley, M.A., of Mansfield College and Oxford University, preached to a large congregation.

Midland Church Calendar for November.

ATHERSTONE : Unitarian Chapel.

Minister : Rev. J. Howard, of Tamworth. Service at 3 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM : Church of the Messiah, Broad Street.

Ministers : Rev. James Crossley, 5, Wyndham Road. Services : 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM : The Hurst Street Mission.

Minister : Rev. W. J. Clarke, 160, Pershore Road. Services : 10-15, 2-45, and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM : The Fazeley Street Mission.

Minister : Rev. T. Pipe, 59, Great Brook Street. Services : 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM : The Newhall Hill Church.

Minister : Rev. A. A. Charlesworth, 18, South Road, Handsworth. Services : 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM : The Old Meeting Church.

Minister : Rev. Joseph Wood, 120, Gough Road, Edgbaston. Services : 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM : The Church of the Saviour.

Minister : Rev. J. C. Street, Bristol Road, Edgbaston. Services : 1 and 6-30.

BANBURY : Christchurch Chapel, Horse Fair.

Minister : Rev. H. Hill, 5, Crouch Street. Service : Evening, 6-30.

Special : November 5th, Sunday School Anniversary Services, Afternoon and Evening.

COSELEY : The Old Meeting House.

Minister : Rev. Henry Eachus. Services : 11 and 6-30.

CRADLEY : Netherend Chapel.

Minister : Rev. A. E. O'Connor. Services 11 and 6-30.

DUDLEY : The Old Meeting House.

Minister : Rev. A. H. Shelley. Services : 11 and 6-30.

EVESHAM : Oak Street Meeting House.

Minister : Vacant. Services : 11 and 6-30.

KIDDERMINSTER :

Minister : Rev. E. D. Priestley Evans. Services : 10-30 and 6-30.

KINGSWOOD : Kingswood Chapel, Hollywood.

Minister : Rev. J. Hardinge Matthews. Services : 11 and 6-30.

LOUGHBOROUGH : Unitarian Chapel.

Minister : Rev. H. Haycock, Beacon Road. Services : 11 and 6-30.

OLDBURY : Unitarian Meeting House.

Minister : Rev. Henry McKean, The Dingle, Oldbury. Services : 11 and 6-30.

SHREWSBURY : High Street Church.

Minister : Rev. E. Myers, F.G.S., Claremont Hill. Services : 11 and 6-30.

STOURBRIDGE : Presbyterian Chapel.

Minister : Rev. A. W. Timmis. Services : 11 and 6-30.

TAMWORTH : Cole Hill Chapel.

Minister : Rev. J. Howard, 17, Aldergate. Services : 11 and 6-30.

THE LYE : Unitarian Chapel.

Minister : Rev. I. Wrigley, B.A. Service : 6-30.

WALSALL. Unitarian Free Church.

Minister : Rev. Peter Dean, 3, Sandwell Street. Services : 11-15 and 6-30.

WEST BROMWICH : Lodge Road Chapel.

Minister : Rev. John Harrison Jesson Street. Services : 11 and 6-30.

WHITCHURCH : Church of the Saviour, Highgate.

Minister : Rev. George Eyre Evans, 5, Mill Street. Services : 11, 2-15 for Children, 6-30.

WOLVERHAMPTON : Unity Church, Snow Hill.

Minister : Rev. L. G. Harris Crook, Oaklands Road. Services : 11 and 6-30.

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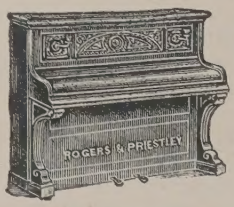

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